



## **SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

### **Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building**

**ACTION:** 30-day notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Small Business Administration (SBA) is seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the information collection described below. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act and OMB procedures, SBA is publishing this notice to allow all interested members of the public an additional 30 days to provide comments on the proposed collection of information.

**DATES:** Submit comments on or before **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit comments by the deadline stated in the **DATES** section above using any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments. Comments submitted electronically, including attachments to <https://www.regulations.gov>, will be posted to the docket unchanged.
- Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). You can find this information collection by selecting “Currently under Review—Open for Public Comments” and searching by title, “Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building”.
- Small Business Administration. Curtis Rich, Agency Clearance Officer, [curtis.rich@sba.gov](mailto:curtis.rich@sba.gov); (202) 205-7030.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information should be directed to Shay Meinzer, Lead Program Evaluator, [shay.meinzer@sba.gov](mailto:shay.meinzer@sba.gov), (202) 539-1429 Curtis Rich, Agency Clearance Officer, [curtis.rich@sba.gov](mailto:curtis.rich@sba.gov), (202) 205-7030, or the *SBA Desk Officer*, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**TITLE:** Generic Clearance for Formative Data Collections for Evaluation, Research, and Evidence-Building

**OMB CONTROL NUMBER:** 3245-XXXX

**ABSTRACT:** This Information Collection Request establishes a new generic clearance to conduct formative studies that inform the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) evaluation, research, and evidence-building activities. Under this generic clearance, the SBA plans to engage in a variety of formative and exploratory data collections with SBA grantees, program and potential program providers and participants, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders to fulfill the following goals:

- maintain a rigorous and relevant evaluation and research agenda,
- inform the development of SBA's future evidence-building activities,
- inform the delivery of targeted assistance and workflows related to program and grantee processes,
- inform the development and refinement of recordkeeping and communication systems,
- plan for the provision of programmatic or evidence-capacity-related training or technical assistance,
- obtain grantee or stakeholder input on the development or refinement of program logic models, evaluations, and performance measures, and
- test activities to strengthen programs in preparation for summative evaluations.

The SBA's formative studies will collect data using well-established methodologies, including but not limited to questionnaires and surveys, semi-structured small group discussions or focus groups, observation, interviews, cognitive interviews and user testing. To minimize the burden of information collections approved under this clearance, the SBA will collect information electronically and/or use online collaboration tools, as appropriate, ask for readily available information, and use short, easy-to-complete information collection instruments when possible.

Conducting formative evaluation, research, and evidence-building activities will help the SBA better understand emerging needs and issues, identify evidence gaps, and ensure that SBA leadership and

program offices have current data and information to implement SBA programs and initiatives successfully. The data from formative studies will be used to improve internal decision-making and inform future studies but will not be highly systematic nor intended to be statistically representative. Findings from these formative studies will not be generalized to the broader population and are not intended to produce influential information that is expected to have a genuinely clear and substantial impact on major policy decisions. Information gathered may inform future evaluation, research, and evidence-building, which could inform future influential public policy decisions.

The primary purpose of data collected under this generic ICR is not for publication. However, because the formative data collection efforts are intended to inform SBA's decision-making related to evidence-building and programmatic activities, the findings may be incorporated into documents and presentations available to the public. Such documents may include design and method documents, process or journey maps, conceptual frameworks or logic models, background materials for technical workgroups, informational presentations, technical assistance plans, and evaluation or research reports. Shared findings will include a discussion of the limitations regarding generalizability and intended use, and when necessary, results will be labeled as formative or exploratory.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:** The populations to be studied include SBA grantees, program and potential program providers and participants, researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholder groups involved in SBA programs, experts in fields pertaining to SBA evaluation and research, or others involved in conducting SBA evaluation, research, or evidence-building projects.

**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS:** Below is a preliminary estimate of the aggregate burden hours for this new collection. The Agency will provide refined estimates of burden in subsequent notices.

**ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS PER ACTIVITY:** One response per respondent per activity.

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL RESPONSES:** 900

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL HOUR BURDEN:** 832.5

The public is invited to submit comments regarding any aspect of this information collection, including the following: (1) The necessity and utility of the proposed information collection for the proper performance of the Agency's functions; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways to enhance the

quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology to minimize the information collection burden of those who are required to respond to the request for information.

**Curtis B. Rich,**

*Agency Clearance Officer.*

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